

Practicing Spanish at Home

It is very important that you spend time each day practicing Spanish at home, because the time we spend in class is just **not** enough. A language is learned bit by bit, and each new thing you learn builds upon something you have learned before. It's kind of like building a house out of Legos...each little block builds on the last block until you have put so many blocks together that it actually takes the shape of a house. Each vocabulary word you learn builds on the letters you learned; each new phrase builds on the vocabulary; each sentence builds on the vocabulary and phrases...it all adds up to KNOWING another language. It also takes a lot of repetition to learn a language really well, so the more you speak it, hear it, read it, and write it, the better you will learn Spanish!

Therefore, you should spend 10-15 minutes EVERY DAY studying your vocabulary outside of class...even when no homework was assigned!!! Here are some ideas:

- ❖ Using your book and notes, look over the material covered in class that day. Practice the vocabulary and try some examples of whatever was discussed.
- ❖ Write out current vocabulary words five times each in Spanish to help you remember how to spell them. Spell and say them aloud as you write them.
- ❖ Draw pictures of the vocabulary words or act them out to give yourself a visual “hook” to help remember them. Practice them aloud.
- ❖ Have someone help you study vocabulary. Even if they don't know Spanish, they could say the word in English and you could say it and spell it to them in Spanish.
- ❖ Use flashcards to practice vocabulary. Follow these steps:
 - Write the English on one side of an index card (or draw a picture).
 - Write the Spanish on the other side of the card.
 - Spread the cards out in front of you, Spanish side up.
 - Say the word out loud in Spanish.
 - Say what you think it is in English.
 - Check yourself by flipping the card over to the English side. If you are correct, leave it English side up. If not, turn it back to the Spanish side and try it again later.
 - When you know them all Spanish to English, all the English sides should be face up.
 - Go through the cards again, trying to say the words in Spanish. This is more difficult.
 - If you can say the word in Spanish, try to say its Spanish spelling, too.
- ❖ You can make up a sentence using each word, or make up a story using all the words (make it mostly Spanish, but it's okay to use English when you don't know the Spanish word).

But what if you just had a quiz and there is no “new vocabulary?”

- ❖ Do some of the things mentioned above with the “old” vocabulary you have studied. The repetition helps you remember those words longer...keeps them fresh in your mind so they are there when you need to use them!
- ❖ Think up words YOU are *really* interested in and look them up in a dictionary or online translator.
- ❖ Speak Spanish at home as often as possible! When you know how to say something in Spanish, say it in Spanish, (then in English so everyone understands you.) Or use “Spanglish” to insert the Spanish words you DO know in a sentence along with English. Converse with siblings or friends who know the language. Or try TEACHING something you have studied in Spanish to a family member.
- ❖ Use media! Watch Spanish TV for 5-10 minutes and see if you can pick out any words that you know. See if you can figure out the overall meaning of what’s happening on the TV. For a real challenge, do this with Spanish radio, where you won’t have visual cues to help you out. Get a Spanish newspaper or magazine, or go on a Spanish language website. Practice your pronunciation by reading things aloud. Even if you don’t know what it means, it will help you to read Spanish aloud. Try picking out words that you recognize from what you read. Make a list of them and say what they mean in English.

Here are some website to check out for additional Spanish practice, including flashcards, quizzes, and games.

www.fcps.edu/DIS/OHSICS/forlang/stars/index.htm

This site has entertaining and interactive activities for practicing vocabulary and grammar based on the 7th and 8th grade En Español text. The “resources by vocabulary and grammar topics” section would be great for 5th and 6th graders to use to find words related to their current vocabulary.

www.classzone.com

This site is from the publishers of our previous 7th and 8th grade textbook. Click world languages, click Spanish, choose book level 1A, the *etapa preliminar* or *etapa I*. There are flashcards that pronounce the words aloud...great for pronunciation, although many words may be unfamiliar for 5th and 6th graders.

www.pdictionary.com/spanish/

Has “flashcards” of different vocabulary by category or letter, as well as fill-in-the-blank, words scrambles, and other activities. Follow the directions on the site.

<http://languageadventure.net/>

This site allows a student to click on a picture and hear the word in Spanish.

<http://www.uni.edu/becker/children.html>

Links to MANY Spanish sites for children to explore!

www.spanishspanish.com

This site has a variety of practice activities available.